



BOROUGH OF OKEHAMPTON

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE



Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1962

PUBLIC HEALTH and HOUSING COMMITTEES

The following members of the Council served on the Public Health and the Housing Committees during the year:

Housing Committee

ALDERMAN H. R. HORNE
ALDERMAN C. G. JONES
ALDERMAN W. T. LETCHFORD
ALDERMAN A. W. RICHMOND
COUNCILLOR A. J. D. BROWN
COUNCILLOR R. C. HAWKINS
COUNCILLOR J. F. HAYHURST
COUNCILLOR MRS. I. V. KELLARD
COUNCILLOR A. L. MARTIN
(died October, 1962)
COUNCILLOR F. A. PARTRIDGE
COUNCILLOR W. J. PASSMORE
COUNCILLOR E. H. RAE
COUNCILLOR R. TAYLOR

Public Health Committee

ALDERMAN C. G. JONES
COUNCILLOR W. W. J. CORNISH
COUNCILLOR A. J. CROCKER
COUNCILLOR J. F. HAYHURST
COUNCILLOR MRS. I. V. KELLARD
COUNCILLOR A. L. MARTIN
(died October, 1962)
COUNCILLOR E. H. RAE
COUNCILLOR C. E. W. WHITE

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health

E. D. ALLEN-PRICE, M.D., CH.B., D.P.H.

Borough Engineer and Surveyor

R. A. BRUNSKILL, M.INST.R.A., M.R.S.H.

Public Health Inspector


R. F. M. SAUNDERS, C.S.I.B., M.A.P.H.I.

Assistant to Borough Surveyor

E. FURSE

Medical Officer of Health's Assistant

MISS P. B. FLETCHER



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MR. MAYOR, ALDERMEN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1962, in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health.

The general health of the Borough has been good throughout the year, and apart from a mild outbreak of German Measles among the pupils of the Primary School, the number of infectious diseases which have been notified to my department have been very few.

Vital statistics are set out in the tables below:

SECTION "A"

General Statistics

Area (statute acres) ...	...	...	...	786
Population – 1951 census ...	...	...	...	3,899
Population – 1961 census ...	...	...	...	3,833
Estimated home population mid 1962 ...	...	...	...	3,800
Number of inhabited houses ...	...	...	...	1,270
Rateable value ...	...	...	...	£52,243
Product of the Penny Rate ...	...	...	...	£207
Loan Debt ...	...	...	...	£191,636

Vital Statistics

				Male	Female	Total
LIVE BIRTHS						
Legitimate ...	...	...	...	17	26	
Illegitimate ...	...	...	...	1	2	
				18	28	46
DEATHS ...	...	...	...	40	41	81

England
and Wales

LIVE BIRTHS

Number ...	...	...	...	...	46	
Rate per 1,000 population ...	...	...	...	...	12.1	18.0
Corrected birth rate ...	...	...	...	...	12.8	
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births					6.5%	

STILLBIRTHS

Number ...	...	...	...	...	1	
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births					21.2	18.1
Total live and still births ...	...	...	...	...	47	

INFANT MORTALITY RATES

Infant deaths under one year ...	...	...	...	...	nil	
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births ...	...	...	...	...	—	21.4
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	...	...	...	...	—
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births ...	...	...	...	...	—
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births) ...	...	...	...	...	—
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under one week per 1,000 total live births) ...	...	...	...	...	—
Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under one week combined per 1,000 total live and stillbirths) ...	...	...	...	...	—

MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE (including abortion)

Number of deaths	nil
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births ...	—

DEATHS

Crude death rate per 1,000 population	21.3	11.9
Corrected death rate	15.3	

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Birth Rate</i>	<i>Death Rate</i>
1958 ...	3,890	10.5	16.4
1959 ...	3,900	14.8	16.2
1960 ...	3,900	11.2	16.6
1961 ...	3,800	12.6	18.1
1962 ...	3,800	12.1	21.3

The chief causes of death were as follows :

Syphilis	1
Cancer	18
Diabetes	2
Vascular diseases	14
Coronary diseases	12
Other heart diseases	10
Other circulatory diseases	2
Pneumonia	4
Bronchitis	7
Other respiratory diseases	3
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	2
Accidental	2
Suicide	1
All other ill-defined diseases	3

Age at Death Table

<i>Age</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Under 1 year	—	—
1–4 years	—	—
5–14 years	—	—
15–24 years	—	—
25–34 years	—	—
35–44 years	1	1
45–54 years	2	1
55–64 years	5	4
65–74 years	6	7
75 years and over	26	28
TOTAL	40	41

SECTION "B"

General Provision of Health Services

There was no change in the general provision of the health service during the year.

National Assistance Act, 1948

No use was made during the year of the provisions of Section 47 of this Act.

Ambulances

The St. John Ambulance Brigade – under delegated powers from the local County Health Authority – provide a twenty-four hour cover for the district as a whole.

Mass Radiography Unit

The Mass Radiography Unit visited Okehampton in May to undertake the examination of special groups such as positive reactor children and their adult contacts, hospital staff, etc. A total of 171 people were examined.

War Memorial Hospital

During the year 71 babies were born in the Okehampton War Memorial Hospital as follows:

Okehampton Borough	...	...	...	...	25
Okehampton Rural	...	...	...	...	37
Others	...	...	...	...	9

Fifty-four per cent of the total births registered to the Borough took place at the War Memorial Hospital.

SECTION "C"

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area

Mr. Brunskill has submitted the following report:

His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Okehampton Borough Council.

I have pleasure in presenting my 34th Annual Report for the year 1962:

Water Supply - Sources

Supplies from watersheds in the hinterland of Dartmoor feed two intakes. One at Newbridge, three miles from the town on the Blackavon stream has 7" and 5" intake mains and has been in operation since 1939, while the much older and smaller, 2½ miles distant at Yes Tor on the Red-a-ven stream with a 4" intake main has been in use for about sixty years. Both are within Okehampton artillery firing ranges. The 5" intake main from the sandpits to the Filter Station were scraped and cleaned in 1957. The 7" mains have been prepared for similar treatment up to the Newbridge Intake. Supplies at the intakes have been quite adequate throughout the year. Water is soft in character.

The quite unproductive work of clearing drains on the abandoned Okehampton Park Estate continues from time to time.

Rainfall

Rainfall records are normally taken monthly at Cranmere Pool and Newbridge on the watershed, and daily at the Filter Station and at the Pleasure Gardens. Returns are sent monthly to the Air Ministry Meteorological Office, the Devon Rainfall Organisation and the Devon River Board, and are set out for the past five years, as follows:

	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958
Cranmere ...	83.85	81.85	74.55	70.00	—
Newbridge ...	57.61	65.80	83.60	56.70	—
Filter Station ...	44.92	52.03	71.57	60.01	58.33
Pleasure Gardens	44.42	50.00	73.30	59.58	55.48
Dry days (no rain)	164	157	138	189	147

The driest months were June, October, July and February, and the wettest January, August, September and November in those orders. Dry spells were October (18 days), November/December (13 days), June (10 days). The heaviest falls were 1.96" on January 16th, and 1.84" on September 29th, and 1.07" on August 6th.

Of the total rainfall nearly half fell in three months January, August and September. The weather on the watersheds remained fairly dry during spring and summer but the available supply at the intakes continued adequate.

The progressive drying up of the surface of the Moor on which I reported last year appears to progressively continue.

Filtration and Treatment

The pressure filtration and lime treatment plant at Brackentor has been in continuous operation throughout the year. Minor faults were remedied by the attendant in daily attendance. A bypass sluice valve with a hydrant so controls the supply that an emergency supply from the intakes can now be diverted to the reservoir without passing through the filter station in case of emergency repairs.

The treated water is clear, soft, colourless and of excellent taste. It is particularly pleasant for both personal use and domestic washing. Analysis indicates it to be of a very satisfactory standard of purity both bacteriologically and chemically. Twenty-four samples taken for bacteriological analysis all passed to Ministry of Health Class 1 standard. P.H. values have been generally maintained at 7.00. Three men operate on a rota of week-end duties at overtime rates.

Chlorination plant in the Filter Station is available for immediate use in case of emergency.

Special maintenance works included the fixing of guard rails at the washout sludge tanks and repainting of building and plant.

Distribution

Zonal distribution, giving a stabilised pressure in the controlled low-level area and maintaining pressure in the outer high-level zones, has now been in continuous operation for 25 years without interruption except for repairs.

Mains

In Brackentor Lane the 6" and 4" mains are linked by three 1½" connecting pipes to reinforce supplies to high level zones.

The pressure gauges control box at Parklands has again proved most useful in connection with the maintenance of proper pressures on the H.P. mains. Minor repairs and overhaul were carried out at the Station Road Pressure Reducing Valve. There was comparatively little frost during the year until the last week in December.

Special maintenance works during the year included a new 3" C.I. main in Klondyke Road to replace two corroded 2" C.I. mains from Parklands to Park View Terrace. A new 3" C.I. main at Brayhams to provide a circulating supply to Brayhams Terrace and an improved supply to Oaklands and Beare Farm Cottages. A new 3" Sluice Valve at the junction of Crediton Road and Limehays Road.

In ordinary maintenance 115 reports were received and/or dealt with.

Services and supply pipes are now mainly laid in copper and polythene tubes. Service stopcocks fixed direct on the mains obviate cutting off mains supply during repairs. New services have been provided for a further 4 flats (new) at Wonnacotts Housing Estate, 6 new private properties and 7 existing properties. Again no restrictions on the distribution supply were required.

Drainage and Sewerage

During the year 400 feet of defective 12" sewer pipes were replaced and 440 yards of sewer pipes were scraped.

Factories and Workshops

Factories and Workshops have been kept in good condition. Inspections have been made in 50 instances. Details of inspections carried out in accordance with the Factories Act, 1961, are set out in the tables below and on pages 8 and 9.

Factories Act, 1961

1. INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISION AS TO HEALTH (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors.

<i>Premises</i>	<i>Number on Register</i>	<i>Number of</i>		
		<i>Inspection</i>	<i>Written Notices</i>	<i>Occupiers Prosecuted</i>
i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	4	—	—	—
ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	45	38	—	—
iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	12	12	—	—
TOTAL	61	50	—	—

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
	— Found	Remedied	REFERRED to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness	2	2	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conven'ces (a) Insufficient	6	6	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	1	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	11	9	—	—	—

3. OUTWORK (Sections 133 and 134)

<i>Nature of Work</i>	SECTION 133			SECTION 134		
	<i>No. of out- workers in August list required by Section 133 (1) (c)</i>	<i>No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council</i>	<i>No. of pro- sections for failure to supply lists</i>	<i>No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises</i>	<i>Notices served</i>	<i>Prosecu- tions</i>
Wearing Apparel (Making, etc.) ...	1	—	—	—	—	—

Public Conveniences

These have been well maintained, and during the year a new Public Convenience for women was built adjoining the car park.

Infectious Diseases and Disinfection

No cases had to be dealt with this year.

Refuse Collection and Disposal

During the year a new tip site was purchased at Peacewater. When this comes into operation early in 1963 it will be possible to dispense with the old tip, which had become an undoubted nuisance in a semi-built-up area.

Rodent Control

Infestation of sewers with rats is still in evidence in some areas of the town, although to a lesser extent than in previous years.

Swimming Pool

Strong efforts are being made under the sponsorship of Councillor Brown and a voluntary committee to provide the Borough with an up to date swimming pool. Should this venture succeed it will undoubtedly provide a most desirable extra amenity in the pleasure grounds.

Smoke Abatement

It has not been necessary to take any formal action in the matter of smoke abatement, but where necessary, advice has been given.

Fish Frying

Both establishments which carry out this trade have been well conducted.

Sanitary Inspections of the Area

The following visits and inspections were carried out during the year.

Housing	...	...	...	...	...	...	177
Drainage	...	...	...	...	...	...	34
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	...	39
Sewerage	...	...	...	...	...	...	82
Water Supply	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Rivers	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Refuse Disposal	...	...	...	...	...	...	124
Dangerous structures	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	...	...	36
Tents and Vans	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Disinfection and disinfestation	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
Food premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	221
Egg Packing Stations	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Informal Notices – remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	460

SECTION "D"

HOUSING

Housing Management, Maintenance and Repairs

Normal maintenance repairs have again been minor in character and small in numbers. All repairs except electrical and exterior painting are carried out by the Council's own small maintenance staff. Houses at Savile Mead were being externally repainted by contract during the year. Contracts were let during the year for painting the remaining 26 houses and 8 flats at Savile Mead Estate and 35 temporary houses.

Repairs are carried out as quickly as possible to avoid excessive maintenance and repair costs. This has been evident in the case of the pre-war houses. In ordinary housing maintenance 205 reports were received and/or dealt with. Arrangements for thoroughly overhauling, cleansing, repairing and redecorating each house on change of tenancy virtually gives each tenant a clean new house at the commencement of occupation. Tenants are also invited to exchange accommodation so as to reduce overcrowding and eliminate under-occupation.

All the 42 pre-war houses at Macey's Terrace and Brayhams Terrace have been provided with concrete coal bunkers.

At Lower Brayhams fourteen Aluminium Bungalows were provided with additional anti-condensation and insulating roofing over the existing corrugated aluminium roofs.

At Wonnacotts Housing Estate work on 8 flats was commenced, but none were completed during the year.

Nine private houses were being built and four completed during the year. Five were in course of erection at the end of the year.

There are several bad areas within the Borough where, sooner or later, slum clearance procedure will be necessary. Probably the worst are in High Street, Church Street, North Street and East Street.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Yours obediently,

R. A. BRUNSKILL,
Borough Engineer, Architect and Acting Public Health Officer

SECTION "E"

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Milk

Milk sampling is now carried out by the County Council – according to the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations 1960.

Ice Cream

Samples of ice cream for bacteriological examination were taken during the year with the following results:

Grade I	...	...	...	4
Grade III	...	...	...	3

Slaughterhouse

One slaughterhouse has been in regular use and has been well maintained. Details of the number of animals killed and inspected and the carcasses parts or organs condemned are set out in the table on page 13

Bakehouses, Meat and Food Shops

The number of food premises in the area are as follows:

Grocers	...	...	...	...	14
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	9
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	4
Bread and Cakes	...	...	...	...	5
Meat Shops	...	...	...	...	8
Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	2
Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	2
Dairies	...	...	...	...	3
Hotels and Bars	...	...	...	...	9
Cafes	...	...	...	...	8

Bye-laws made under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 for the proper handling of food sold for human consumption are in force.

There is one large modern hatchery, and one large and two smaller egg-grading and packing stations, all of which have been maintained in good order.

Other Foodstuffs

Forty-six tins and packets of foodstuffs were condemned and 9 condemnation certificates have been issued.

Food Poisoning

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year.

Samples taken under Section 2, Food and Drugs Act, 1955

Whisky	}	ALL GENUINE
Sherry		
Fruit Salad		
Buns and Butter		
Buttered Kipper Fillets		
Jamaican Rum Truffles		
Pork Luncheon Meat		
Shredded Beef Suet		
Okehampton Rock		
Lard		
Hydrous Ointment		
Bread and Butter		
Butter		
Salmon Spread		
Scones and Butter		
Chicken and Ham Paste		
Extract of Herbs		
Milk - 96 samples		

CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR IN PART

	<i>Cattle excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Lambs and Sheep</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number Killed (if known)	283	3	6	902	560
Number inspected ...	283	3	6	902	560
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysterci:</i> Whole carcasses con- demned	—	—	1	6	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	71	1	3	48	23
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affec- ted with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci ...	25.1%	33.3%	66.67%	5.99%	4.11%
<i>Tuberculosis only</i> Whole carcasses con- demned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	—	—	—	—	7
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affec- ted with tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	1.21%
<i>Cysticercosis:</i> Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrig- eration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—

SECTION "F"

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases

Infectious diseases notified by Medical Practitioners

				<i>Scarlet</i>		<i>Measles</i>		<i>Pneumonia</i>	
				<i>Fever</i>					
				<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 year	—	—	—	1	—	—
2 years	—	—	—	1	—	—
3 years	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 years	—	—	1	—	—	—
5-9 years	—	—	—	3	—	—
10-14 years	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-24 years	—	—	—	1	—	—
25 and over	—	1	—	—	1	—
Age unknown	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL				—	1	1	6	1	—

Infectious diseases notified by School Authorities

		<i>Measles</i>	<i>German</i> <i>Measles</i>	<i>Scarlet</i> <i>Fever</i>	<i>Mumps</i>
Okehampton C.P.	...	1	50	1	5

Tuberculosis

There were no deaths recorded from this cause during the year. Two new cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were admitted to the Register.
At the end of the year twenty-five cases remained on the Register as follows:

<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	
<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
11	11	2	1

In conclusion, I would thank the Mayor and Corporation for the ready hearing my proposals always receive, and the Public Health Staff and others who have assisted in the preparation of this report.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant.

E. D. ALLEN-PRICE,

Medical Officer of Health

